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# "The Expanding Role of Small Business", White House Conference on Small Business

Max S. Baucus

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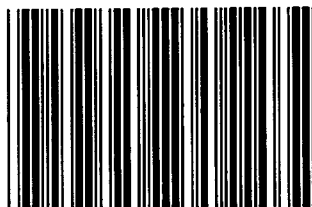
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BAUCUS

## THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON SMALL BUSINESS

### THE EXPANDING ROLE OF SMALL BUSINESS

Of the nine million new jobs created between 1969 and 1976, three million were with state and local governments and six million were with small businesses. The nation's unemployment rate has dropped from 8.1% in late 1976 to 5.8% in November 1978, and most of the decrease was due to small business employment. Small business accounts for 48% of the non-farm GNP and 55% of private employment. In short, small business plays a big role in world economics.

The White House Conference on Small Business has taken the position that this role should be expanded to increase competition, improve productivity, enhance export capabilities, increase employment opportunities, and stimulate community development.

#### What does the Conference intend to do?

The Conference will formulate policy recommendations to be presented to the President in the spring of 1980. These recommendations will focus on issues and opportunities facing small business during the next 25 years and will attempt to utilize existing federal resources more effectively for small business. The Conference hopes to develop a comprehensive strategic plan to encourage the establishment and growth of America's small business.

How does the Conference intend to go about its task?

By August, 1979, we will have talked to over 25,000 persons engaged in small business in all 50 states. To supplement and enlarge upon the issues raised at these field meetings, we plan to form small task forces of nationally recognized experts who will be appointed to review and analyze small business topics.

During the next few weeks, the Conference Staff will be compiling materials relevant to the issues and proposals raised at the field conferences and will draft research proposals for the task forces. Based on our initial surveys, the Conference will review the following issues:

- A. "Operations Issues" generic to establishing and running a business.

Capital formation and retention

- Sources of venture capital
- Cash flow
- Taxation

Management

- Regulations and paperwork
- Employment relations
- Technical assistance needs

Marketing

- International opportunities
- Communications: between government agencies, between small business and government, and within the small business community itself.

Research and development

- Incentive programs
- Federal contract availability

B. Specific topics which are of prime concern to the small business community.

- Federal procurement - Is the system too complicated for small business? Where are the economics of government dealing with small business? Increased competition may hold the key.
- Minority business development - Small business development in minority communities might be the best way to help solve unique environmental and community problems.
- International trade - The U.S. small business has tremendous potential to boost U.S. export capabilities, as well as to assist developing nations in solving the infrastructure problem which they face.
- Evaluation of government programs - Government programs designed to aid small business may not be operating effectively or achieving results commensurate with the costs involved.
- Inflation - Are there special concerns, unique to small business, that should be factored into federal inflation policy?

Women in business - How should the federal government redirect programs to insure equal opportunity for women in the business community?

The topics listed above will be refined and expanded as the research process goes forward. Accordingly, we will review our work periodically with the SBA, Commerce, the House and Senate Small Business Committees, and government staff.

The task forces will advise on the scope of the research, the analysis of the findings, and the preparation of the option papers for presentation to the Commission and the Conference.

What will be the results?

Task forces will propose alternatives and make recommendations for:

- Administrative initiatives and changes - those which can be made under existing law by Executive Order or by agency action. The task forces will assist in drafting and implementing the changes.
- Legislative initiatives and changes - those which require new legislation or changes in existing legislation. The task forces will assist in drafting the legislation, and preparing testimony for Congressional hearings.
- Private sector initiatives - the various components of the private sector can be encouraged to work more closely together to solve the problems facing small business.

What is being done now?

During the field conferences and the task force research process, the Conference is monitoring federal agency programs which impact small business. The President has requested each agency to develop, prior to the Conference, an initiative which will provide significant assistance to small business. The Conference staff is working with the SBA Advocate's Office to review these proposals and will make suggestions as appropriate. Such initiatives include:

- A small business export program utilizing existing federal resources, simplifying complex export rules and facilitating trade abroad for small exporters.
- One and one-half billion dollars of energy research and development funds over the next several years which will be redirected at small firms.
- Millions in research and development monies allocated by NASA to help small business enter major space research fields.
- An agreement by several major banks to try lending to small enterprises at reduced rates.
- Changes in SBA rules to enhance financing programs for banks.

The Conference is seeking ideas and recommendations from a broad range of individuals and groups in the small business community. Should you have suggestions or questions please contact:

Dr. J. R. Kirkland, Director  
Research and Policy Development  
The White House Conference on  
Small Business  
730 Jackson Place  
Washington, D. C. 20006

1979 REGIONAL CONFERENCES & OPEN FORUMS IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

Minneapolis Open Forum	April 18	Downtown Radisson
Des Moines Open Forum	April 27	Hyatt House
Indianapolis Open Forum	May 4	Stouffers Hotel
Omaha Open Forum	May 9	Hilton Hotel
St. Louis Open Forum	May 11	Chase-Park Plaza
Kansas City Regional	May 24-25	Airport Hilton
Honolulu Open Forum	June 1	Ala Moana Hotel
Charleston Open Forum	June 6	Charleston House
Richmond Open Forum	June 8	John Marshall Hotel
Detroit Open Forum	June 14	Plaza Renaissance
Philadelphia Regional	June 22-23	Sheraton Valley Forge
Milwaukee Open Forum	June 26	Red Carpet Hotel
Anchorage Open Forum	July 6	Captain Cook Hotel
San Francisco Regional	July 16-17	Fairmont Hotel
Fargo Open Forum	July 25	To be announced
Helena Open Forum	July 27	To be announced
Sioux Falls Open Forum	August 1	Holiday Inn
Chicago Regional	August 9-10	Pick Congress
Montpelier Open Forum	August 14	State Capitol Building
Concord Open Forum	August 16	New Hampshire Highway House
Augusta Open Forum	* August 17	To be announced
Hartford Open Forum	* August 23	Hartford Hilton Hotel
Providence Open Forum	* August 24	To be announced
Casper Open Forum	* August 30	To be announced
Salt Lake City Open Forum	* August 31	To be announced